SECTION 3.

DOWNTOWN STRATEGY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

RECOMMENDATIONS
on the
LAFAYETTE DOWNTOWN STRATEGY AND SPECIFIC PLAN

April 1, 2009

PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Parking Structure
   - Remove the blue Target A on the graphic.
   - Use one color to show potential areas for a structure(s), including the former Target A location.
   - Use another color to show aggregated parking.
   - Include a description of parking structure requirements (e.g., number of spaces, minimum parcel size).

2. Parking Standards
   - Describe a process that might gradually existing reduce parking standards near the BART station based on monitoring and surveys, if conditions warrant.

3. Circulation
   - Explain better the underlying concept of the Plan to reduce long-term congestion by recalibrating the balance of uses in comparison to long-term congestion under the General Plan.
   - On page 6-3 and elsewhere showing the street network, remove all the dotted lines and ROW reserve from the graphics.
   - On page 6-5:
     - Modify Action 1.3.1 to read: *Through the new parcel development and redevelopment process, provide new circulation connections to more efficiently serve property access (not through traffic) and access to aggregated and public parking facilities.*
     - Modify Action 1.3.1 to delete all bullets.
     - Eliminate Action 1.3.2.
   - Provide more context for the circulation elements by discussing past efforts, particularly MORTRAC.
   - Include more language that describes congestion on Moraga Road resulting from school traffic and why working with the schools is important to address this congestion.

4. Shield Block
   - Provide principles for the redevelopment of Shield Block to include:
     - an open space / gathering area, rather than a multi-use park, on the northeast side of Happy Valley Creek at the east side of Lafayette Circle
     - protection of existing oak trees
     - creek enhancement to continue the path from the BART station into the Lafayette Circle area
     - retail uses along Lafayette Circle
     - residential, office and restaurant uses along the creek
   - Revise the graphics on page 7-7 to illustrate these principles.

5. Creeks & Parks
   - Remove C7.
   - Remove P1 and P3.

6. Height and Density
   - Raise the height limit in the General Plan to 45' for selected portions of the planning area.
   - Retain 35' as the height limit in the Zoning Ordinance for the planning area.
   - Place overlay zones on appropriate parcels, as recommended by the Planning Commission, where additional height could be conditionally allowed.
   - Establish guidelines for allowing additional height, including those in the General Plan, variations in building heights, setbacks, and stepbacks, and open space.
   - Explain redevelopment requirements for affordable housing and density bonuses.
   - Retain 35 du/acre in the Downtown Residential District.
   - Retain 35 du/acre in the Gateway District.
   - Include text that is consistent with the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance amendment to create an overlay district specifically for senior housing which addresses their unique parking and density needs for seniors currently underway by Planning.

7. Implementation – Financing
   - Add a section about ongoing maintenance of public improvements, including costs and funding sources.
   - Include property acquisition costs in the capital improvement costs.

8. Implementation – Priorities
   - Identify the following as *Immediate Priorities (not in order of preference)*:
     - Increased public parking in the Downtown Retail District, including off-site employee parking;
     - Shield Block improvements;
     - Library Park;
     - Mount Diablo Blvd. Downtown Streetscapes; and
     - Pedestrian walkway gaps.

9. Implementation – Opportunity Areas
   - Provide more language about the purposes of the concept drawings.
   - Generalize concept drawings.
   - On page 9-10, highlight and modify the following sentence: *The identification of these sample sites is in no way meant to be a recommendation of the Specific Plan or any kind of endorsement of these sites over any other sites for development.*
   - On page 9-15, highlight the following paragraph: *There are no specific development plans for these opportunity areas at this time. Specific development plans and programs have not been formulated for the se opportunity areas, and would ultimately be shaped by market forces, plans of private property owners, and the types and amount of assistance that could be provided by the Lafayette Redevelopment Agency.*

SECONDARY ISSUES

1. Document title
   - Rename the document the Downtown Lafayette Specific Plan.

2. Private Realm Vision Statement
   - Change the vision statements on pages 3-10 and 7-29 to be the same as the following modified statement on page 7-38 (Community Character Goal 7): *A Downtown where the development of the commercial/mixed use and residential neighborhoods encourages the continued evolution of a distinctive Lafayette character (described in general as informal with variations in styles, massing, building heights and setbacks, public sightlines to surrounding hills and a dominance of landscape) and a high level of quality.*

3. Seniors
   - Add a separate section to the Plan about senior needs because, by 2020, 30% of Lafayette will be seniors. The section should address housing, transportation, and a senior facility.

4. Uses
   - Align zoning districts and uses to the Plan's character districts.

OTHER ISSUES

Issues that will be addressed in the EIR

This is a list of issues raised the Committee as needing to be addressed further. These issues will be addressed in the EIR along with other effects required by CEQA to be analyzed and any others that are raised through the EIR scoping.

- Comparison of the Plan with existing policies and standards (General Plan, specific plans, zoning, other documents)
- Traffic measurements at AM and PM peaks as well as school traffic peaks
- Parking surveys, including residential near BART
- Bicycles vs. cars, bicycle safety
- Shuttle feasibility and value
- Moraga Road and other right-of-way improvements and their effect on circulation
- FEMA and its effect on redevelopment

Minor issues recommended for Plan revisions

- General Revisions – Graphics
  - Add more street names to plans and graphics
  - Label each plan and graphic with the figure number (example – Fig. 1.2)
  - Add cross-references between the text and figures
  - Use landmarks, such as new Library, Vets, BART station, for points of reference on the plans
  - Correct, as necessary, directions on plans and cross-sections
  - Label graphics of development scenarios as illustrative only
  - Add more narrative about what the graphics and plan demonstrate
  - Remove time-sensitive information from graphics, such as bus route numbers
  - Describe the existing ambience of the Downtown with photos of real places in Downtown
  - Provide keys and legends to all plans
  - Check graphics are consistent with text
  - Change "Albertsons Block" to "Plaza Center Block"
  - Label the sketches of development scenarios as "sample concept"
  - Add a scale to the plans that shows feet/miles
  - Move the eastern boundary of the Downtown Retail District to First Street

- General Revisions – Text
  - Add a glossary – some terms to define:
    - action
    - aggregated parking
    - BID
    - Class I, II, III
    - goal

- job/housing balance
- low-scale
- policy
- streetscape
- TOD
- VMT

- Include descriptions of the zoning districts
- In District descriptions, include more information about prevalent uses, such as restaurants in the Retail and auto-services uses in the East End
- In District descriptions, discuss what is the character that needs to be maintained, enhanced – like Brown Avenue
- Define types of uses, such as service and retail
- Describe the existing ambience of the Downtown in text
- Change references to "Town Hall" to "Town Hall Theater"
- Delete references to the post office relocating or as a typical civic use
- Incorporate policies and standards from the existing specific plans that are still current
- Add a discussion about the importance of tree preservation and new trees
- Add prefaces to each chapter and/or section to explain the assumptions
- Check text is consistent with graphics
- Explain the "park-once" concept in more detail
- Change "Albertsons Block" to "Plaza Center Block"
- Change "Funky Town" to "Brown Avenue District"
- Include references to other chapters when it would help explain something
- Move the eastern boundary of the Downtown Retail District to First Street

- <u>Specific Revisions</u>

  - <u>Executive Summary</u>
    - Add Circulation

  - <u>Chapter 3 – Community Vision</u>
    - Expand the discussion in describing the Downtown's character as unique with small town feeling and urban cultural opportunities and public amenities
    - Describe the ambience found in the Downtown and illustrate with photos
    - Page 3-1: Change the portion of the Vision Statement from "...encouraging small local businesses..." to "...encouraging local businesses..."
    - Page 3-9: Identify the parks on the Plan by name
    - Page 3-10: replace the Eureka photo with one more representative of Lafayette
    - Page 3-10 and 3-11: Delete "organic" from captions or explain what organic means

  - <u>Chapter 4 – Sustainability</u>
    - Move the discussion about AB 32 and SB375 to front of the chapter to provide context
    - Show that the Guiding Principles were adopted by the City Council
    - Add some actions to the policies
    - Add other General Plan policies that address sustainability
    - Delete reference to Obama administration
    - Page 4-5: Add open space and trees to the list of measures
    - Change "Climate Change" to "Sustainability" in the goals and footer

  - <u>Chapter 5 – Land Use</u>
    - For each of the districts, explain more that the character is defined by the existing character

- For each of the districts, describe better the specific buildings and uses that contribute to the character
- For each of the districts, explain more why each district is a good place for the types of uses (example – why are civic and cultural uses good is the Civic and Cultural District)
- In this chapter, add a discussion about public uses – senior center (and community center, city offices, fire station, police, utilities, etc.)
- Add more actions to implement the policies
- Page 5-14: Remove reference to Acalanes High School
- Page 5-15: Move to Chapter 4
- Page 5-20: Use correct real estate terms
- Page 5-21: Make it clear that ground floor retail is allowed

▫ Chapter 6 – Circulation
- Reduce the number of actions and make more general, not as detailed
- Include an action about design standards for parking structure(s)
- Explain in more detail the relationship with the adopted Bikeways Master Plan
- Investigate whether the topography and property ownership would allow for a pedestrian path between the end of East Street and the Methodist Church
- Page 6-2, 2nd paragraph, last sentence: Change to "...pedestrian / bicycle safety facilities, on-street parking, and service"
- Page 6-4: Explain "walkable sub-districts"
- Pages 6-5 and 6-6: Rewrite Policy 1.4 and Action 1.4.1 to be clearer
- Page 6-10, Action 2.3.1: Explain how the car-free option would be enforced
- Page 6-16, Action 4.4.2: Make clear this includes handicapped accessibility
- Page 6-21, Policy: Change to encourage showers and require bicycle parking

▫ Chapter 7a – Community Character – Public Realm
- Sidewalk sections in the core should be wide enough to promote strolling and outdoor dining
- Page 7-12: Add explanation that the cross-section is a typical and illustrative and final design will include adequate breaks in medians for turns and street tree standards to maintain visibility of businesses
- Page 7-15: Include sentence that the trail will connect neighborhoods north of the planning area to the downtown
- Page 7-20: Move 7a.4 to 7b
- Page 7-25: Add a cross-section to add a structure between the creek and Golden Gate Way at the Gazebo
- Pages 7-26 and 7-27: Update the Public Art section to reflect latest City requirements

▫ Chapter 7b – Community Character – Private Realm
- Add a plan(s) that generally shows where the height and density limits apply
- Page 7-30: Take out "occasional"
- Page 7-30: Explain the concept of variations and indentations better, but keep it simple
- Page 7-31: Add a sentence about the concepts are only that and they do not represent a preferred or required development scenario
- Page 7-34: Explain the intent of the cross-section
- Page 7-36: 55 du/acre is a typo – should be 35 du/acre
- Page 7-38: In first policy, change "preserve" to "investigate" and delete parking strategy (is this an action?)
- Page 7-38: Include historic structures that are listed in the General Plan and other structures with cultural significance
- Page 7-38: Add an action about investigating viable uses for historic buildings
- Page 7-40: Move green buildings to Chapter 4

- Chapter 8 – Community / Public Services and Facilities
  - Page 8-1: State that these are existing services and facilities
  - Page 8-2: Describe Police and Fire to show total resources for the downtown
  - Section 8.4: Include senior services and trails
  - Section 8-4: Move the Lafayette-Moraga Trail to EBRPD

- Chapter 9 – Implementation Strategy
  - Reorganize this chapter to discuss sources first, then cost estimates, and then priorities
  - This chapter needs it own executive summary that explains that this is a strategy, not a financial report
  - Show fiscal information on spreadsheets in the technical volume
  - Show what dollar year is being used
  - Round numbers to closest $100K
  - Page 9-2: Add "Estimated" to the table title
  - Reflect what is in the matrix in the text, and not introduce new standards without explanation in text
  - Reference in the matrix where these are in the text
  - Include the findings that are in the General Plan about additional height in the Plan
  - Page 9-15: Move the last two paragraphs since they apply to all the blocks (if opportunity areas remain)
  - Page 9-22: Indicate that the $7,642 fee is for an apartment or condo

DOWNTOWN STRATEGY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
CITY COUNCIL and REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY BOARD

MEETING NOTES – January 31, 2009

Committee:		City Council:	Staff:	Public:
Mike Anderson	Erling Horn	Mayor Don Tatzin	Steve Falk	Jay Lifson
Jeanne Ateljevich	Ruth McCahan	Vice Mayor Brandt Andersson	Ann Merideth	Mark Mitchell
Carol Singer	Kathy Merchant		Niroop Srivatsa	Joan Bruzzone
Scott Honegger	Buck Hughes			Dave Bruzzone
Tom Lee	Geoff Bellenger			Lynn Hiden
Ann Denny	Brayton Noll			Eliott Hudson
Tom Chastain				Joanne Archer
				Brian Harrington

Approval of the agenda

The agenda was approved.

Public comments

- Joan Bruzzone commented on the lack of notice to downtown property owners.
- Lynn Hiden commented about the lack of notice to the community.
- Dave Bruzzone commented on traffic not being adequately addressed and impacts resulting from inclusionary housing.
- Mark Mitchell commented on his concern about increased densities and heights and referred to the communitywide survey results.

The Committee decided to end the meeting by 3:00-4:00 pm.

Recordation of comments

- Ann Merideth explained the review of the Draft Plan by other commissions and committees and that all comments from these meetings will be forwarded regularly to the Committee as well as being posted on the website.
- Ann Merideth said she will send the Committee an updated process schedule.
- Niroop Srivatsa gave an overview of the Housing Element revision schedule.

Introduction and overview of the Draft Specific Plan

- Ann Merideth gave a brief overview of the process used by WRT to complete the Draft Plan.
- Committee comments:
  - The goals in the Draft Plan do not match the Committee's goals. Ann Merideth said the work of the Committee is throughout the document.
  - The Executive Summary should include more about the process and acknowledgements. Ann Merideth said both are already planned for inclusion.

Discussion of the Draft Specific Plan

- Format of the discussion

  - The Committee decided to work through each of the sections and to skip the Executive Summary.
  - Committee members made the following comments:
    - Add more street names to maps
    - On page 1-2, add the parameters of each district
    - Add cross-references in the text to the figures
    - Identify where things are by showing more features on the maps
    - Don't put in too much information
    - Identify key landmarks on maps
    - Be careful about what is shown or there will be a negative reaction.
    - The north-south orientation of the drawing on page 1-9 is confusing.
    - Do not like the name "Funky Town".
  - The Committee discussed the title of the document – whether it is a strategy plus specific plan or whether it is now just a specific plan. The Committee decided to discuss further at the end.

  - Public comments:
    - Dave Bruzzone referenced the dotted line going through his property on page 1-7.
    - Lynn Hiden said the title of the document is misleading.

- Introduction

  - Section 2.2.3, Committee comments:
    - What has not been brought forward from the original Specific Plans needs to be identified
    - People need to know what we are losing from those Plans
    - There should be a chart that compares the Draft Plan with those Plans
    - There should be a process to carry forward what was left behind
    - People should not have to look at multiple documents – just one Plan

  - Section 2.2.4, public comments:
    - Dave Bruzzone said the environmental review will be most critical piece of process because this is about losing property rights.
    - Mark Mitchell questioned the statements on page 2-4 about not needing additional environmental review.
    - Ann Merideth responded that provision is currently CEQA law, we can do that now. She also confirmed that the Planning Commission will do the CEQA scoping.

  - The Committee had a further discussion about how to move the process forward. There were concerns by some Committee members about the amount of time the review was taking and the role of the public to comment throughout the Committee's discussions. The Committee agreed to continue to go through chapter by chapter of the Draft Plan and to limit public comments to the beginning of each chapter's discussion.

- Section 2.3, Committee comments:
  - This section should explain why there is a difference in the two areas
  - When did the Committee decide to change the boundary?
  - The map on page 2-4 is not clear.

- Section 2.4, Committee comments:
  - Add more information about the process to the Appendix.

- Community Vision

  - Public comments:
    - Mark Mitchell said the term "pedestrian-scale" should be incorporated into the vision on page 3-1 and/or 3-10.
    - Dave Bruzzone said the paths shown on 3-7 impact their property. The map on 3-9 shows open space – we do not need open space in the downtown. There is too much housing in the downtown. Is this a deliberate effort to cut into the number of single-family homes outside the downtown? More children downtown will impact schools.
    - Joan Bruzzone said the paths shown on 3-7 impact their property.

  - Page 3-1:
    - Is "small town" okay?
    - The Community Character goal on page 7-38 should be moved to the Community Vision
    - The Senior Services Commission recommended that this goal be added: *Develop an aging-friendly community which addresses six areas of concern; housing, transportation, health care and wellness, neighborhood quality of life, involvement in the community, and support services. All of which support our aspirations to stay healthy, live independently, and lead full and productive lives.*
    - This recommended goal should be added to the Overall Vision
    - The goal is too specific.
    - This Draft Plan is about all ages
    - If one group is added, then all groups should be added
    - We need to support our diversity
    - The Draft Plan should include everyone
    - The Committee agreed the all ages should be addressed in the Overall Vision – "age-friendly
    - There is concern about "small town", "small local businesses"
    - "Small town" is emotional – we are doing a plan, therefore we are not small town
    - Need to come back to this issue

  - Graphics in the Draft Plan:
    - Hate the graphics – they show what is in the Draft Plan which people will not like
    - The graphics load the issue – the content is not banal
    - What are the values being expressed in the sketches
    - The sketches are very informative
    - Every sketch should be labeled "Illustrative Only"

  - Route numbers shown on page 3-3 will change.

- Page 3-5:
  - In the Civic and Cultural District, the reuse of the Park Theater will never happen
  - Civic uses should be focused on in this district
  - The Committee agreed that "Funky Town District" should be changed to "Brown Avenue District

- The Committee discussed the goals that they prepared:
  - The Nov 25 goals were never finalized – the Committee never got them
  - They are not in the Draft Plan
  - Does not having the Committee's goals in the Draft Plan make it flawed?
  - The Committee goals need to be published somewhere
  - Perhaps they could be added into the Technical Volume
  - There should be a matrix that shows what happens to the Committee's goals
  - Acknowledge what the Committee did

- Page 3-9: The Open Space map on should identify the three parks.

- Page 3-10:
  - Delete "organic" from the caption
  - Use the Committee's goal that is on page 7-38

- Page 3-11, Eureka photograph:
  - This is not representative of Lafayette – replace the photograph
  - Delete "organic" from the caption

- <u>Sustainability</u>

  - Public comments:
    - Dave Bruzzone asked if this environmental section is setting a higher standard than everyone else?
    - Joan Bruzzone said more regulations will keep developers away.
    - Lynn Hiden said that more density in the downtown means more street infrastructure will be required.

  - Page 4-1:
    - First paragraph is conclusionary – it will bring out the non-believers
    - Move the discussion about AB32 and SB375 to the front of the chapter
    - This is about Lafayette's ethic
    - It makes good business sense – everyone else will be doing it, too

  - Page 4-2: Show that the Guiding Principles were adopted by the City Council.

  - Page 4-5: Add to the list of measures that open space and trees can reduce emissions as well.

  - General comments about chapter:
    - Add some actions
    - Change "Climate Change" to "Sustainability" in the goals and footer

- Land Use

  - Public comments:
    - Elliott Hudson said this chapter is the heart and soul of the document. This is the consultant's document; it is not what people want. A lot of people like "small". There is no mention of hills. Look at the Housing Element – Eden Housing has a higher density and there is no landscaping. The Committee should direct the consultant to remove higher densities and increased height.
    - Lynn Hiden said WRT reduced the amount of retail.
    - Jay Lifson said there needs to be signage along Mount Diablo for retailers down the side streets. The Plan should not over-regulate uses. The drawing on page 7-35 implies only residential uses.
    - Joan Bruzzone said there are problems for retailers in the downtown with unsupervised children now. More housing will bring more of these problems with children.

  - Page 5-2, second column, 4th line: The term "limited land" should be explained.

  - Page 5-3:
    - Should there be a "Restaurant Row" node?
    - The text should make reference to the number of restaurants in the Downtown

  - Page 5-4: Revise the second bullet to read better.

  - Page 5-5:
    - Complimentary uses are being bunched
    - This "bunching" is based on the observations of what it is happening now
    - WRT has to say this in public
    - Implies that it makes sense
    - Define service vs. retail

  - Page 5-6:
    - There is no change from now
    - Mixed use should be m ore favorable in mixed use
    - Mixed use means we are not segregating uses

  - Page 5-7:
    - Second column, remove reference to Park Theater
    - Should the Downtown Retail District be moved east to First Street?
    - The Moraga Road boundary makes sense
    - The east side is different than the west side

  - Page 5-8:
    - Isn't MRT already built out?
    - Why change to MRA
    - The Committee discussed the difference between the two districts
    - MRA provides for property assemblage
    - Need a glossary

- The Draft Plan should talk more about zoning – show on maps, explain the describe the different districts
- Example: what does SRB mean?

- Page 5-9:
  - What does "low-scale" mean?
  - Does "low-scale" mean height?
  - Is each of the buildings shown two stories?
  - The sketches need more explanation – label them as "Example", number of stories, add text about what is being shown
  - Explain why the change from MRT to MRA
  - Can the ambience of this neighborhood be maintained?
  - Draft Plan needs to talk about the existing ambience and how it needs to be maintained
  - Use photos of the area that shows this ambience, good examples of higher density housing in the area

- Page 5-10:
  - The map is confusing since it looks like Moraga Road goes through the shopping center
  - Shouldn't McCaulous and Whole Foods be part of the Downtown Retail District/
  - The Committee agreed that the boundary of the Downtown Retail District should be extended east to First Street north of Mount Diablo Boulevard
  - This area needs to be treated the same as the Safeway side
  - Boundary description should include Town Hall
  - Change "Town Hall" to "Town Hall Theater"

- Page 5-11:
  - Missing Committee goal: "Create a senior center"
  - District is described as "new", but the cultural and civic uses are already there
  - Explain that the district captures what is existing
  - Action 1.3.1 – parking isn't the issue, the issue is the building's viability
  - Perhaps talk about the "Park Theater Site" and possible other uses, such as senior housing
  - Relocating the Post Office will cause more traffic congestion
  - Reference to Post Office seems out of place
  - Describe this District as a good place for civic and cultural uses
  - Restructure the argument about why these uses are appropriate in this District
  - Include senior center as use of the old Library
  - Inclusion of the action about City offices in the old Library is a result of the Finance Review Committee's recommendation and Council direction to address the issue in the Specific Plan
  - The District description should not include specific uses
  - Lafayette School District might want the old Library
  - Lafayette School District definitely does not want the old Library for any purpose
  - Post Office is not a civic use
  - Mixed-use will not appeal for families for housing
  - The façade of the Park Theater could be retained as the façade for a parking structure

- Page 5-12:
  - The Committee agreed that name should be changed from "Funky Town District" to "Brown Avenue District"
  - Need actions on to achieve the eclectic character
  - Create an overlay district that does not control uses, but that creates a design vocabulary
  - We don't want to preserve the existing buildings necessarily
  - Rewrite to stress design standards
  - Make it a special use district to attract certain types of uses
  - "Preservation of physical form" – is that what we want?
  - Do we need to downzone this area?

- Page 5-14:
  - Remove reference to Acalanes High School
  - Talk more about offices
  - No ground floor retail
  - East of Pleasant Hill Road should be transitional to residential
  - Retail is okay west of the cemetery

- Page 5-15: Should this be moved to Chapter 4?

- Page 5-17:
  - Second column – the sentence about three stories is conclusionary
  - It mandates/validates three stories
  - It is a true statement about the financial reality – denying it hurts our options
  - This is current situation in the market – will it be the same in the future?
  - The Draft Plan uses densities and heights as caps – there should be more tradeoffs to gain public benefits
  - This sentence should be deleted
  - Include the standard from the BART Block Specific Plan about greater height is a privilege

- Page 5-18:
  - How do you control traffic on Moraga Road
  - This is a regional strategy – it is our responsibility as a city with a BART station

- Page 5-19:
  - First column – more people downtown will add passengers to local transit, not necessarily BART
  - Air quality in the downtown is worse because of Highway 24 – living downtown is not healthier
  - The regional approach takes the pressure off Moraga to produce housing
  - People coming to our downtown to work is a good thing
  - This section has few actions
  - People clogging the downtown as those of us that live outside the downtown in our single-family homes – a new mindset is needed about living downtown

- Page 5-20:
  - Second column, 3rd line – "urban environment" – is this defining the new downtown?

- "Urban" can mean "urbane", can mean culture, activities
- "Visitors" means everyone that doesn't live in the downtown – how does this Plan affect everyone else?
- Are we creating two communities – people who live downtown and people who don't?
- "Restaurant Row" is not semi-rural, small town – it is urban
- Pedestrian-friendly is an urban concept
- We are not Nebraska
- I walk downtown from home now because of the sidewalk improvements on Moraga Rd
- Change "urban" to "downtown"?
- Change "urban" to "urbane"?
- Distinguish between urban scale and urban activities, amenities
- A vibrant downtown needs people living downtown
- Leave out "urban" and talk about amenities and cultural life
- Needs actions about the variety of housing
- Second column, last sentence – incorrect real estate terms

- Page 5-21: Second column, – make it clear about ground floor retail being allowed

- Page 5-22
  - I like what is proposed
  - This is the best part of the Plan – the vision for parks
  - Important to the long-range vision for the downtown
  - It can be done piece by piece
  - We don't need to everything, especially using public funds
  - Character of the Shield Block needs to be retained – important block to the downtown
  - Redevelopment of this Block should not be required for the creek improvements
  - WRT did not use all of the Creek Committee's recommendations
  - Priorities about creeks make sense
  - This piece of the Plan is an identity issue
  - Relationship of the parks to creeks is disjointed
  - The Draft Plan does not talk about tree preservation anywhere – especially as part of the open space/creek system
  - Parks and creeks should not be dependent on public dollars
  - There is money out there for parks – we have to find ways to afford them
  - Ongoing maintenance costs are not covered – these will be the big issues because there is not money for those out there
  - If there are more families living in the downtown, they will need parks
  - Don't higher property values result in more money for maintenance?
  - Emphasis should be on the "open space", not that it is a "park" because of concerns about water supplies in the future
  - Same issues about the medians – how are they maintained?
  - Creeks are the armature of the downtown
  - This section needs actions
  - Consultant needs to explain how we pay to maintain the creeks

- Page 5-23:
  - Reflect what is in Steve Cortese's letter *(attached to these meeting notes)*

- We want businesses that are sustainable, no matter if they are local or national
- We want the "boutiquey" feeling and do not care about the ownership
- Are we confusing words – "urban", "corporate"?
- Are these words really evil, too much like Walnut Creek?

- Mike Anderson relayed Joanne Archer's comments

The Committee continued discussion about:

- Circulation
- Community Character – Public Realm
- Community Character – Private Realm
- Community / Public Services and Facilities
- Implementation Strategy (includes Financing)

Next Steps

The Committee decided to have another Saturday meeting to complete its review.

Adjourn

January 29, 2009

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Re: Lafayette Downtown Strategy & Specific Plan – DRAFT

Dear Mike & Ann:

As mentioned to Ann by email, I will not be able to attend our committee's meeting since our meeting date was switched to January 31. I would like to provide some opinions on the draft Plan prior to the meeting date.

I have reviewed the entire Plan and for expediency's sake I will comment mainly on those areas that I believe need more thought and discussion by our committee before finalizing the Plan.

First, allow me to address the Community Vision as stated on p 1-1 and 3-1. I don't consider Lafayette a "small town". This term is also used on p 3-8. When I think of small town I think of Old Town Clayton and the lack of vibrancy that goes with it. Yes we have charm and a unique natural setting, but we also have vibrancy and an energy today that is not normally associated with "small town".

Also, the vision statement encourages "small local businesses". This term is also used on p 5-4 and 5-23. Is local to mean Lafayette or Lamorinda owned? And how small is "small". I think what the community wants is a healthy mix of unique independent/sub-regional tenants (Yankee Pier, Powell's, Misto Lino, Diablo Foods, Pizza Antica, Yarn Boutique, Chow, Specialtees, etc.) and regional/national tenants (Trader Joes, Starbucks, Peet's, Chico's, Noah's Bagels, etc.) that serve our community's needs. This mix will create vitality in a downtown and this in turn creates vibrant pedestrian activity.

Second, I have some strong feelings about Section 1.2 - Create Downtown Parks and Creek Greenways, p 1-3 through 1-5, 3-9, 5-22, 7-4 through 7-7, etc. Two of the four or five parks shown are within the Downtown Retail District as depicted on p 5-7. I was present when our committee discussed parks in the Downtown. My opinion then and now is that public spaces in private developments as discussed on p 7-20 are a very important amenity to soften developments and create pedestrian space with-in a development. I previously used the example of the fountain area with circular seating across from

Nordstrom in Walnut Creek as an example. These environments serve the people using a downtown. In my opinion, downtown green parks do not. Neither do they really get much use by people coming from outside the downtown. I agree that they sound nice and look nice on paper, but exactly who are they serving? "If we build it they will come" does not apply with downtown green parks as can be seen by Plaza Park. I am not criticizing Plaza Park, but other than sponsored events, Plaza Park is lightly used.

Successful retail is delicate and fragile. It requires a lot of little and not so little physical characteristics for itself and its surrounding land uses, and unless you have a real critical mass, downtown retail and pedestrian activity would be hurt by a Town Green type of recreational area. As low key as the Petar's and the Hen House properties are, they create more synergy for La Fiesta Square than a green park would. Based on existing land uses, size of the existing properties, size of the proposed Town Green park, loss of parking, and cost of purchasing and building the green park, I do not believe this park is economically viable for either the private sector or public sector.

Alternately, we should focus our community's energy and financial resources into the Happy Valley Creek Greenway. The HVCG is truly unique. It is a creek in the middle of the Down Town Retail District that flows 12 months (I think). How many cities have this natural physical amenity in the middle of their downtown? I think the existing creek can be turned into a positive pedestrian amenity and that it should be economically viable to do so when the adjoining properties are redeveloped. While I don't believe the creek and retail are directly compatible land uses (with the exception of restaurants), any retail near the creek can be oriented towards the streets, and the creek is an amenity to office and residential and a gem for pedestrians who seek it out.

Third, The parking facility is shown in the Downtown Civic and Cultural District, p 1-8 & 6-9, not in the Downtown Retail District. I am not aware of any perceived parking problem in the Civic and Cultural District (other than for a closed single screen theater and the Bruzzone property that specifically relates to Whole Foods, and for the latter I am not clear on how much of a problem actually exists or that there aren't obvious remedies). The parking facility should be in the Downtown Retail District.

Fourth, we should consider allowing increased heights to 42.5 feet around Lafayette Circle, particularly where mixed use residential/retail is proposed. Unless I am mistaken, the Plan only allows 42.5 feet for properties fronting Mt. Diablo Blvd. By giving the private sector added incentive to redevelop along the HVCG, the City gives itself the chance to reclaim the creek as a public amenity.

Ann, please share these thoughts with the rest of the committee. I appreciate everyone's willingness to entertain the points I've raised in this letter.

Very Truly Yours,

/s/

Stephen A. Cortese

DOWNTOWN STRATEGY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
CITY COUNCIL and REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY BOARD

MEETING NOTES – February 21, 2009

Committee:		City Council:	Staff:	Public:
Mike Anderson	Erling Horn	Vice Mayor Andersson	Ann Merideth	Jay Lifson
Jeanne Ateljevich	Ruth McCahan	Councilmember Federighi		Joan Bruzzone
Carol Singer	Kathy Merchant			Dave Bruzzone
Scott Honegger	Buck Hughes			Eliott Hudson
Ann Denny	Geoff Bellenger			Chuck Stuart
Tom Chastain	Steve Cortese			Virginia Stuart
				Bill Stuart
				Mary Miller
				Traci Riley
				Janet Thomas

Approval of the agenda

The agenda was approved.

Public comments

- Janet Thomas said she was formerly an Acalanes High School faculty member and is currently on the Environmental Task Force. She thanked the Committee for its work. She said young people in their 20s and 30s are excited about the Plan with its parks and creeks. They are excited about Lafayette might be affordable for them. She like the housing near BART and making walking easier. The Plan offers lots for seniors, too.
- Dave Bruzzone said he liked parts of the Plan a lot, but he did not like other parts. This Plan came out of the blue. There are too many heavy hands, and things are being forced on them.
- Chuck Stuart made some observations about the Downtown and the Plan.
- Traci Riley said the process did not consider the views of young families. More housing in the Downtown will make the traffic much worse.
- Dave Bruzzone provided comments about the circulation and creek trail on his St. Mary's Road property.
- Eliot Hudson commented on his concern about increased densities and heights and referred to the communitywide survey results.
- Joan Bruzzone made comments about the process making it difficult for property owners with too many regulations and that developers and new businesses were being driven away.
- Virginia Stuart asked about the availability of the Plan.

Process for organizing recommendations and comments

Ann Merideth gave an overview of the process developed by Mayor Tatzin, Councilmember Anderson, City Manager Steve Falk, Planning & Building Services Manager Niroop Srivatsa, and herself. There was a lengthy discussion about the process and schedule. The Committee recommended that it see the Final Draft Plan after Council accepts the document with revisions on April 27 and before it goes to environmental review. The Committee also asked to meet between the March 17 meeting with WRT and the April 13 joint meeting with City Council.

Discussion of the Draft Specific Plan

- Circulation

  - Public comments:
    - Traci Riley wanted to address the traffic. She said high density would be nice for seniors and young adults, but it will cause more traffic. Our children have all their activities, and it is a nightmare getting through town now. She said she does not want to see the downtown change. The silent majority do not want to see it change. Families were not consulted. People will not want to give up their cars. She does not believe that more housing downtown will not result in worse traffic.
    - Geoff Bellenger responded it was a comparison of growth scenarios and traffic. Building downtown vs. building outside the downtown.
    - Joan Bruzzone asked why is the City so subservient to the State? She had comments about the graphic on page 6-3 showing new local streets and the ROW reserve. She the City is making us do it. The 1st Street section will take their property. There should be no parking on 1st Street.
    - Ann Denny asked staff to explain the housing regulations.
    - Eliot Hudson asked that the term "pedestrian walkways" replace "sidewalk". He commented on the housing regulations.
    - Chuck Stuart said he would submitting comments at the February 24 Chamber of Commerce meeting. He had concerns about the ROW reserve on page 6-3.
    - Janet Thomas wanted to respond to Ms. Riley. She said she is very excited about the Plan, and her neighbors are excited, too. They are families and they hope that this Plan goes forward. This Plan with its housing is the right thing to do for economic and environmental reasons. Growth downtown is better than growth on the hillsides.
    - Bill Stuart had questions the housing requirements.
    - Brandt Andersson responded that their significant ramifications for the City if it were to ignore the State.

  - Page 6-1: no comments

  - Page 6-2:
    - In the middle of the column, there needs to be standardized measurements that are looked at all day long, not just AM and PM peak
    - Action 1.5.1 shows we need more information
    - Can we install permanent counters to get ongoing information – loops are there, add the counters
    - Not sure where development will occur to require ongoing monitoring
    - 2nd paragraph, last sentence – change to "...pedestrian/bicycle safety facilities, on-street parking, and service"

  - Page 6-3:
    - Improve the maps
    - What is the neighborhood streetscape?
    - Lower graphic needs a key
    - Upper graphic – what are the dotted lines and what are their importance

- Does gentrification depend on these new streets/
- They have to be reality-based
- Where are the incentives
- The dotted lines are commenting on the current network on these properties – the consultant observed the problems
- What is ROW reserve? It shows up differently on 14 different maps
- The trail needs a feasibility study
- Isn't this showing a corridor with all of these things – future road, walkway, etc?
- These came from the walking tour and observing how the drive aisle behind Baja Fresh functions as a "street"
- We told the consultant, and they gave us the options for dealing with the problems
- We should not shoot down the options until they are determined to be infeasible
- Get rid of the Moraga Road extension north of Mount Diablo Blvd
- The use of aqueduct is not explained in one place
- Erling Horn had to leave, but said:
  . On page 6-3 abandon the cross streets shown as dotted lines
  . The extension of Moraga Road shows what is there today – it is not new
  . We should keep what we have in terms of parking standards
  . Changes need to supported by studies
- Number all maps
- Add cross references between graphics and text
- We do not agree that the dotted lines / cross streets should be deleted
- Call out the aqueduct with its own paragraph
- Are these graphics and actions mandatory?
- Are these guides to development?
- Because this is a specific plan, we should make sure what is in here is what we want
- We should not propose absolutely crazy ideas
- Adding the dotted lines constrains future development
- We need to challenge the consultant to explain the network
- Is the ROW reserve even realistic
- Need preface to explain the assumptions
- Example: explain the housing regulations in a preface

- Page 6-4:
  - 1st paragraph, 4th sentence: "The best way..." won't reverse the trend
  - Policy 1.1: What does "walkable sub-districts" mean, what is the norm as a point of reference
  - Policy 1.1: "...residents and visitors" – that is scary, what about me?
  - Ann Merideth said Policy 1.1 was from the Committee

- Page 6-5:
  - Action 1.3.1 does not match the graphic on page 6-3
  - Not all bullets shown on graphic on page 6-3
  - In policies, include references
  - Action 1.3.1: should the dotted lines on page 6-3 be eliminated?
  - Are the dotted lines for through traffic?
  - Actions 1.3.5 and 1.3.6: what is the rationale for 14' trails?

- They were proposed for bikes and kids getting to and from school
- Policy 1.4: need clarification about "reinstating"

- Page 6-6:
  - Action 1.4.1: add reference to a subcommittee
  - The actions in this chapter are too detailed

- Page 6-7:
  - Define VMT
  - LOS D – reducing traffic is insurmountable

- Page 6-8:
  - 1st paragraph: where are the parking surveys
  - The issue is there are an adequate number of spaces but they are in the wrong locations
  - Action 2.1.1: will the City do this monitoring?
  - Action 2.1.5: Park Theater should not be included

- Page 6-9:
  - Parking structure needs to be in the Downtown Retail District
  - Where?
  - Target zone would serve the downtown, but it should be in the downtown core
  - Behind the Methodist Church is not in the core, but it would be a good location
  - Dewing and Mount Diablo Blvd would be a good location
  - Maybe there should be more than one facility or show more than one potential facility
  - The theater area should be one target for parking, not the only target
  - How many parking spaces can be provided in the core?
  - Map needs a legend
  - Possible additional action – employers to provide off-site parking
  - Should there be design guidelines for parking structures?
  - City is subject to its own standards
  - Action 2.2.1: change "maximum" to "minimum"
  - Standards should not be changed even though they would help with gentrification
  - There will be a future with fewer cars
  - The consultant should talk to the Committee more about this
  - Senior housing does require less parking
  - On the graphics, distinguish between public and private parking
  - We currently allow for a reduction in standards for mixed use
  - The parking standards should not be lowered until there is a public parking facility

- Page 6-10:
  - Action 2.3.1: "...car-free option" – how do you enforce so people will not park on the street instead?
  - It is a creative idea for encouraging fewer cars, but how do you enforce?
  - "Park-once" philosophy sets off alarms
  - It is not going happen for all of the downtown
  - Park once for the sub-districts would work
  - Needs more narrative

- Change "park-once" to "sub-district parking"
- Add Methodist Church to the map
- Show Target A as just A
- Executive Summary should include Circulation

- Ruth McCahan had to leave, but she said:
  - There is nothing in the Plan about a senior center, and it needs to be added.
  - Pedestrian crossings are important to seniors
  - Do something about the Squirrels parking spaces

- Page 6-11:
  - Widths of traffic lanes on Moraga Road are too narrow at 10'
  - Where were the existing lanes measured?
  - Check the accuracy of the existing ROW
  - Bike lanes cause cars to slow down and cause congestion
  - Add a preface and define Class I and 2
  - Do not reduce the widths of medians
  - 1st paragraph, last sentence – why do it?
  - Why put a 5' bike lane on the east side of Moraga Road/
  - We should not degrade vehicular circulation for bicyclists
  - Aren't these in the adopted Bikeways Plan?
  - 2nd paragraph: what does "new Class 3" mean?
  - If we discourage bikes, we are going to go against the overall philosophy of reducing traffic
  - No one has shown it is dangerous
  - We cannot stop bicycles downtown
  - We need wide sidewalks, too, if we are going to have a pedestrian-friendly downtown
  - Pedestrians are getting the short shrift, too
  - Where are the studies that show the danger for bicyclists next to parked cars?

- Page 6-12:
  - Need better graphic
  - Confirm consistency with the Bikeways Plan
  - Is it feasible to have a bikeway next to a creek, such as near Golden Gate Way?
  - The cross-sections show there is adequate room
  - City Engineering requires a minimum 10' for multi-use
  - Eliot Hudson gave an example from Davis
  - Graphic – where is Moraga Blvd?

- Page 6-13: no comments

- Page 6-14:
  - Section 6.5 does not stress pedestrian enhancements
  - Is Policy 4.1 consistent with paragraph above?
  - Why only 5' sidewalks in the core – isn't 5' too narrow in the core where you want wider sidewalks?
  - Action 4.2.1: Policy 5.1 should be 4.1

- Page 6-15:
  - Make the graphic more clear
  - Fix the map reference
  - There was a discussion about the a pedestrian connection between Brook Street and La Fiesta via a dirt path down the hill at the end of East Street
  - The creekway shown on the Bruzzone's St. Mary's Road property was not recommended by the Creeks Committee
  - Is it feasible for a creekway?
  - The consultant should explain the dotted lines north of Mount Diablo Blvd

- Page 6-16:
  - Action 4.4.2: Does this mean handicapped accessibility?

- Pages 6-17 and 6-18: no comments

- Page 6-19:
  - The shuttle should run be expanded to run between the Veterans and the Hotel
  - No one uses the Walnut Creek shuttle
  - A shuttle can be something different in the future

- Page 6-20: no comments

- Page 6-21:
  - Policy 2.1.1: Do not drive out businesses with more parking meters
  - Policy 6.1.3: This is okay
  - Policy 6.1.4: Change to encourage showers and require bicycle parking

- Page 6-22: no comments

- <u>Community Character – Public Realm</u>

  - Public comments:
    - Eliot Hudson said he feared a canyon down on Mount Diablo Blvd with the increased building heights and setbacks being eliminated
    - Joan Bruzzone made several comments, including:
      . Putting a shield on the downtown will stop businesses
      . Plan puts public easements through private properties
      . Golden Gate Way owners do not know what is planned for their properties
      . Medians should not be reduced
      . Are all the public improvements on public or private property?
      . Where is the fairness doctrine?
      . City's parking requirements is keeping Whole Foods from opening

  - Page 7-1:
    - "...unique built form" – what does this mean?
    - "...small-town environment" – we are not small-town, but we are unique

- Pages 7-2 and 7-3:
  - Major concern – parks do not belong in the downtown
  - 15 years ago the downtown was not vibrant, but now it is – a park will become a dark spot
  - The parks shown as P1 and P2 will take away parking and retail space
  - Retail behind a park will not work
  - What makes the downtown vibrant are its retail and restaurants
  - Hardscape space can serve retail, but green retail cannot
  - Creeks can work
  - Need to focus on the quality of these spaces
  - Do not know where this worked anywhere else – we do not have the critical mass
  - We did not say we wanted a park at P2
  - Parks downtown have been on the wish-list of a lot of residents – we have to address this wish
  - It would be a huge cost to the City and it would remove affordable housing
  - What are we looking for – green space? play space? gathering place?
  - Example: Mercer Island
  - Surprised to see the rendering in the Plan
  - It shows existing trees, but takes out trees
  - Envisioned originally as a less green space
  - It is a bandstand venue for Art & Wine
  - The Hen House should be preserved
  - Incorporate a small space
  - Do not like a playground in this location
  - Mixed-use on Lafayette Circle could be great
  - To get to the creek, there has to be redevelopment
  - The creek is the real amenity
  - Example: Ashland – we would not have to get rid of Petars
  - We need to protect Mount Diablo Blvd frontage – can we reach the creek from the south side?
  - We do want to keep Petars
  - Look at the Shield Block as a whole
  - Bank of the West is more problematic
  - Need a vision for the Shield Block
  - Need entryways, rather than parks, to the creek
  - Entryway at either end, mixed use and restaurants along the creek
  - Retail does not like to be near the creek, restaurants and office like the creek
  - This block should not have parks, it should have an enhanced creek
  - Replan the Shield Block to include parking, creek enhancement, mixed uses, and entryways / gathering spots
  - There is already a path along the creek, but the public cannot use it

- Pages 7-6 and 7-7:
  - Same comments as above

- Page 7-8:
  - Park Theater Park is a creekway, not a park
  - Park across from the Library is the real park with a playground

- Page 7-9:
  - Rewrite Policy 1.1 to reflect above

- The Committee continued its discussion of the remainder Community Character – Public realm, Community Character – Private Realm, Community / Public Services and Facilities, and Implementation Strategy.

Next steps

The Committee agreed to another meeting during the evening but start earlier. Given the timing, the date will be picked and whoever can attend will be there, There would be no discussion about process. The Committee discussed public comments.

Adjourn

The Committee adjourned to a meeting to be scheduled.

DOWNTOWN STRATEGY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
CITY COUNCIL and REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY BOARD

MEETING NOTES – March 2, 2009

Committee:		City Council:	Staff:	Public:
Mike Anderson	Erling Horn	Vice Mayor Andersson	Ann Merideth	Jay Lifson
Jeanne Ateljevich	Kathy Merchant			Joan Bruzzone
Carol Singer	Buck Hughes			Maeve Pessis
Scott Honegger	Geoff Bellenger			George Burtt
Ann Denny	Steve Cortese			
Tom Chastain	Brayton Noll			

Approval of the agenda

Two items were added -- #4 to talk about the written public comments and #5 to talk about heritage buildings. Erling Horn commented that staff now had the latest bus route information.

Public comments

- Maeve Pessis thanked the Committee for its hard work. She was there to back up the LHC letter. She thought the article in the Sun did not reflect the strong feelings expressed at the Workshop, especially about height and density. She mentioned the architect who talked about that these are plans for a new, homogenized city, and they are changing the fundamental character.
- George Burtt echoed Ms. Pessis/ comments. He said the Acalanes neighborhood agreed with the LHC letter. They were concerned about new roads to Bickerstaff, and the Plan hurting traffic.
- Joan Bruzzone said do not put the dotted lines into concrete. There will problems with new stop signs and signals and traffic backing up on the freeway. There are problems with the aqueduct. Has the Committee and City thought about the costs of taking private property?

Continued discussion of the Draft Specific Plan

- Community Character – Public Realm
  - Public comments: none
  - Page 7-10: In Policy 2.1, what is the minimum sidewalk width?
  - Page 7-11: no comments
  - Page 7-12:
    - Tom Lee's ideas for Mount Diablo – take out medians, use diagonal parking and wide sidewalks
    - Bold ideas
    - Vehemently oppose ideas
    - Disaster
    - Easier to go to Moraga than this design
    - Non-starter to remove the medians
    - Ideas do address an issue – the lack of activity on the north side of Mount Diablo Blvd.

- Would encourage jaywalking
- A circulation disaster
- At the Workshop, two East End owners were concerned with improvements, but were okay if there were enough cuts in the medians and trees do not block signs
- There is a fear of losing diagonal parking
- East End is a huge landing strip
- Intermittent medians could break it up while allowing for left turns, not as costly to do, not as costly to maintain
- Medians are traffic calming
- Need a plan view showing the improvements
- DSIMPIC plan needs to updated, and that's where the details will be shown
- The Plan should not get into details
- The cross-section is a prototype and it should say it is illustrative
- Will eventually have to look at every block
- These cross-sections provide the guidelines
- Add text that says these are typical and actual design will accommodate specific needs
- The Committee agreed to support the concept
- Is there adequate space for just strolling?
- Medians have to 12' to accommodate turn lanes and adequate space for trees
- We should not try to engineer the components
- West End improvements are okay.

- Page 7-13:
  - East End –
    . Do not get into the numbers
    . Gain more side landscaping
    . Like the components
  - Is it appropriate to have bicycles downtown?
  - Are there any studies – should be looked into before putting bicycles downtown
  - Are there other ways to accommodate bicycles?
  - Would bicyclists use a bypass?
  - There are conflicts between bicycles and pedestrians, too
  - It is not safe for families to bike downtown
  - People riding their bikes downtown are more careful because they have to be
  - Can we find a bypass – what about the aqueduct?
  - Kids are going to ride their bikes downtown because they want to go downtown
  - Kids ride their bikes on the sidewalks
  - We allow bikes on sidewalks unlike most cities
  - It is dangerous to have bikes on sidewalks
  - Bikes are legal on streets – is it safer to have dedicated bike lanes?
  - Are these sections consistent with the Bikeways Plan?
  - It says "signed but not striped"
  - Check consistency between the Circulation chapter and the cross-sections
  - Use sharrows – keep it undefined
  - The components are okay

- Page 7-14: Components are okay

- Page 7-15:
  - Take off all dimensions?
  - Narrowing of traffic lanes are a concern of Circulation Commission

- 10' lanes cannot accommodate big rigs
- 14' trail – we need a feasibility study
- We should say that it will connect to Deer Hill
- Deer Hill is outside the planning area

- Page 7-16:
  - For Moraga Road, we need better counts, consider a center turn lane, and eliminate on-street parking
  - 6' sidewalks with trees is too narrow for accessibility
  - The Plan should talk about green streets that capture rainwater, not divert rainwater
  - MORTRAC –
    . The Committee talked about what happened with the MORTRAC process
    . Need on-street parking for retail
    . Lafayette businesses should not be penalized because of Moragans driving through town
  - Can big rigs fit within a 10' lane?
  - Big rig is 8'4" to the outside mirrors

- Page 7-17:
  - Golden Gate Way is ripe for redevelopment
  - Should setbacks be required?
  - Consensus was not setbacks required

- Page 7-18: no comments

- Page 7-19: no comments

- Page 7-20:
  - Is 7a.4. misplaced?
  - Do not like the design of Cinema Court as shown, but support the idea of outdoor space

- Page 7-21: no comments

- Page 7-22:
  - Referred to the previous discussion about the Town Green / Shield Block concepts
  - There is a concrete wall – the only way to get to the creek is through redevelopment and acquiring the property
  - Redevelopment cannot be piecemeal
  - Redevelopment would have to solve parking
  - Is green space acceptable to the Committee?
  - This area is between 1-1/2 bars – have to be careful that you do not create an environment that results in crime and other problems
  - We are trying to design this block – we should leave it blank in the Plan or create guidelines
  - There is support for the concept by the public, but how do we implement?
  - 12 Shield Block owners do not want to do one project
  - Is this a vision or a huge, infeasible task?
  - All it takes is one project to get things going, one piece at a time
  - It is something we do want to do
  - Owner of Spruzzos and other properties was at the Workshop and he is very excited about the Strategy
  - This Plan should encourage and support, then let market work its magic
  - Parks, Trails & Recreation Commission never said playground

- Support the last sentence
- C7 not shown on the graphic, but should it be deleted?
- Consensus was to delete C7

- Page 7-23: no comments

- Page 7-24:
  - Creeks Committee did not recommend the creek improvements by the Methodist Church
  - WRT should explain the creek network
  - C3 and C4 – support the concept while recognizing the difficulties

- Page 7-25: Add a section showing a structure between the creek and Golden Gate Way

- Page 7-26: Need the feasibility study for anything on the aqueduct

- Pages 7-26 and 7-27: Update the Public Art section to reflect current City regulations

- Community Character – Private Realm

  - Public comments: none

  - Page 7-29:
    - Should the vision be replaced with the longer one page 7-38?
    - No – keep what is there

  - Page 7-30:
    - "...occasional indentations" means we lose views of hills – people do not want that
    - What is in the General Plan new allows you to build to the street
    - We want variation
    - The Plan adds more control than we have now
    - The Plan means we will have variation
    - Take out "occasional"
    - For those that are fearful about the Plan resulting in a canyon – the easy properties are gone, things are going to go slow from here on out
    - A canyon is what we get now under the current General Plan and zoning
    - Need to explain it better – keep it simple
    - Degree of hysteria about this issue is amazing

  - Page 7-31:
    - Change "Albertsons Block" to "Plaza Center Block"
    - The sketch is pretty much what is there now
    - These are truly concepts except for the road system
    - The Plan has to say that the City will not hold the owner to this sketch
    - The sketches do show ideas and show the principles
    - They show what is in the General Plan
    - Say "sample concept sketch"
    - Should be the sketches be more diagrammatic so they do not look finalized?
    - Will not matter – people will ask where are the windows
    - In the East End off of Mount Diablo, have single-use higher density
    - On the north side of Golden Gate Way, more height could be appropriate

- Page 7-32:
  - In the Shield Block and at Town Center, FEMA requirements add 2'-3' more – 42.5' might not be the right number for FEMA areas
  - 42.5' would be a condition – still have to go through design review
  - Additional height will be mitigated by good design
  - Height measurement should not be changed
  - If you like the Mercantile as a retail building, you are okay with the additional height
  - If you do not care about retail in the downtown, they you do not need the additional height
  - Bigger issue is design review
  - Look at Town Center retail – one-story buildings that no one likes
  - A counter argument is keep it at 35' and let the developer ask for more
  - Planning Commission should want the 42.5' because it makes for a better designed project
  - Message is not getting out that adding more retail is valuable to the community
  - Greater height as a privilege should be added
  - Explain the lower graphic better – it is about light coming in, not views out
  - Plan needs to show graphically where additional height is allowed conditionally so people do not think it is the entire downtown
  - What are the design guideline tools?
  - The tool is the conditional approval
  - There is a process, a judgment involved – not just rules

- Page 7-33:
  - Agree with the 2nd paragraph
  - We do not need the "privilege" language

- Page 7-34:
  - Viewline from BART now looks down on HVAC equipment
  - Need to explain now that the City uses the BART platform for measuring height now for certain things
  - Need a label with the graphics that explains the intent better

- Page 7-35:
  - The views of the hills from the freeway and BART is a measure we use now
  - 65 du/acre is okay

- Page 7-36:
  - 55 du/acre is a typo – should be 35 du/acre
  - Lafayette Circle needs 42.5' to accommodate the right retail
  - Where we want high quality retail we should have 42.5'
  - High priority sites need more flexibility
  - Consensus was "small-scale mixed use" height should be 42.5'
  - The use permit will prevent the 42.5' wall – nothing preventing the 35' wall now

- Page 7-37:
  - What is "current neighborhood character" – is that what is shown on the diagrams/
  - The diagrams are not showing a specific neighborhood
  - Diagrams show development scenarios
  - Why change the density in "small-scale infill residential"?
  - Heart of the issue is 45 du/acre and neighborhood character
  - Consensus to keep the density at 35 du/acre

- Page 7-38:
  - Keep at 35', 35 du/acre
  - Park Theater – movies will not work
  - Change "preserve" to "investigate" and delete parking strategy
  - Include downtown historic buildings that are listed in the General Plan
  - Add an action about investigating viable uses for these historic buildings

- Page 7-39: Change as discussed earlier

- Page 7-40: Move green buildings to Chapter 4

Adjourn

The Committee adjourned to the March 3 meeting.

DOWNTOWN STRATEGY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
CITY COUNCIL and REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY BOARD

MEETING NOTES – March 3, 2009

Committee:		City Council:	Staff:	Public:
Mike Anderson	Erling Horn	Vice Mayor Andersson	Ann Merideth	None
Jeanne Ateljevich	Kathy Merchant			
Scott Honegger	Buck Hughes			
Ann Denny	Geoff Bellenger			
Tom Chastain				

Approval of the agenda

The agenda was approved with two additions carried over from March 2 – #4 to talk about the written public comments and #5 to talk about heritage buildings.

Public comments

None

Continued discussion of the Draft Specific Plan

- There was another discussion about the diagram on page 7-32. Geoff Bellenger showed a sketch that he did that questioned the numbers in the Plan diagram. His calculations show that a 3rd floor stepback at least 23' would be required so that someone across the street could not see the 3rd floor. Comments were:
  - Someone would not be able to see the hills anyway
  - This is about light, not views
  - Add more narrative about the purpose of the stepback
  - Is this really a scientific problem"
  - Sketch does not account for trees in the median

- Community / Public Services and Facilities

  - Page 8-1:
    - Is this the chapter where the senior center should be added or should it be under Public Realm?
    - Put it under 8.4 and describe the existing senior services

  - Page 8-2:
    - Confirm the numbers of fire and police
    - EIR will describe and analyze all the services
    - Add trails to 8.4
    - Move Lafayette-Moraga Trail to EBRPD

- Implementation Strategy

  - Page 9-1: no comments

- Page 9-2:
  - In the table footnote, what does pc mean?
  - There are no costs for acquisition
  - The presentation of these numbers make people ask, "Are we dreaming?"
  - The $63 million needs to be presented in context of the Plan timeframe – not going to happen tomorrow or all at once
  - Put something in the text about these numbers come from
  - This chapter needs its own executive summary
  - Should be explained that this is a strategy, not just stating costs
  - Add more cross-referencing
  - The numbers give you a scale of magnitude
  - Subtotals for each category would be helpful
  - Show what is the dollar year
  - In the title, say "Estimated"

- Page 9-3:
  - We need maintenance costs
  - Need to know what it will cost to keep it if we build it
  - Should property acquisition costs be shown
  - Footnotes – repeat the fine print information in the text
  - Show the fiscal information in spreadsheets in the technical volume
  - Discuss the numbers with WRT
  - Show numbers 5-7 years out (example: Buckeye Fields)
  - Show a budget number in today's dollars – not a project development number -- then a factor can be used to estimate future costs
  - Round numbers to $100,000

- Page 9-4:
  - First footnote not finished
  - At the Workshop, there was both support and concern for East End improvements
  - Library Park should be higher priority than Gazebo
  - Why are we talking about priorities before funding sources?
  - Downtown sidewalks should be the highest priority
  - Updating the DSIMPIC plan should be priority
  - List is weighted towards streetscapes
  - What improvements would result in greatest synergies?
  - Do not where the priorities came from
  - If you do the Library Park, do you include the creek improvements?
  - Change the Target A parking structure
  - Drop P1 and P2
  - P3 not really a park
  - Redoing DSIMPIC should be an action on page 7-10 under 2.2
  - It is already an action in 2.2.6
  - We should be doing this backwards – what are the drivers and then what are the priorities
  - More attractive East End will attract new development
  - Lay out what we want, then use the Plan to take advantage of opportunities
  - The sections on pages 9-18 through 9-25 should be put first in this chapter – sources first, then cost estimates, and then priorities
  - The strategy should be building on what we already have
  - Looking at page 9-3, the Shield Block improvements should be a high priority, then the core improvements

- Parking should be a high priority
- We are solving problems
- Let's not forget the East End
- Shield Block improvements would give retail a second frontage
- Point at the general concept in the Plan, and then do a detailed plan later
- Gazebo Park is owned by the City and could be a good demonstration project
- Priorities have to capture the imagination
- The Committee agreed to the following priorities:
  . Public parking structure in the Downtown Retail District
  . Shield Block improvements
  . Library Park
  . Downtown core streetscape
- These priorities build on what is already there
- The new housing can benefit from these, too
- Committee agreed that the best location for a parking structure is the Methodist Church lot off Lafayette Circle
- Second site would be the corner of Dewing and Mount Diablo

▫ Pages 9-6 and 9-7:
- Ann Merideth distributed the matrix prepared by staff that might make it easier to understand what is being proposed
- Should we get rid of the FARs?
- FARs control the amount of building, but they can be abstract and arbitrary
- Can do a better job of controlling the building with other standards, like height, setbacks, etc.
- Open space – it should be made clear that you cannot always buy your way out by paying a fee
- Breaks between buildings – plazas, walkways, paseos – not addressed
- The matrix should reflect what is in the text, not introduce new standards without any explanation
- Add a comments column to staff's matrix
- Open space can be part of negotiation
- Reference in the matrix where an item is discussed in the text
- The findings for additional height currently in the General Plan should be included in the Plan

▫ Page 9-8: no comments

▫ Page 9-9: no comments

▫ Page 9-10:
- Problems with the opportunity sites
- They should not be in the Plan
- Add label as "sample"
- Shield Block should the number one opportunity site
- There is confusion between these opportunity sites and priority projects
- These add to the controversy
- They are necessary because it is good to show sample
- We need to hear from WRT
- Do not particularly like what they did but am glad that they did it
- Good visual tool
- The last sentence in the second paragraph should be in italics
- Change "opportunity" to "sample"
- Change graphics to diagrams
- People look at them the wrong way

- Do not identify specific projects
- Leave it as simple as possible
- Let people use their own imagination and put the information in the text
- But a visual presentation is helpful
- Take one site and show a variety of development scenarios
- Not use a real block, use a generic block with three scenarios

- Page 9-15: The last two paragraphs refer to all the blocks

- Page 9-16: no comment

- Page 9-17: no comment

- Pages 9-18 to 9-25: Move these sections to the front of the chapter

- Page 9-19:
  - Should we talk about eminent domain?
  - Eminent domain policy is up to the City Council

- Page 9-20: Redevelopment Agency is required to be in debt

- Page 9-22:
  - $7,642 fee is for new condos or apartments
  - Show the dollar year
  - Shows capital costs, not maintenance

- Page 9-23:
  - Define TOD
  - Add section on maintenance

- Page 9-24: Define BID

- Page 9-25: no comment

- General comment about the entire Plan – Where appropriate, include references to documents in technical appendices for additional information.

- Historic properties

  - Instead of calling them historic properties, call them landmark properties?
  - There is difference between an historic building and an historic use
  - Identify buildings that are important to the character of the downtown
  - Does that mean that these buildings cannot be touched?
  - How do we control that?
  - The consensus was not to make any changes

- Written comments

  - From the 2/21 meeting notes, what was meant by adding a preface?
  - We want to say what are the drivers of this Plan up front
  - From the 2/21 meeting notes for page 7-8, WRT's vision did not meet PT&R's vision

- Review of Community Workshop and Chamber of Commerce meeting: The Committee discussed the two events. The consensus was both events were helpful to the process.

Adjourn

The Committee adjourned to the March 17 meeting. Ann Merideth said she will send the draft lists of issues to the Committee for its comments this week, and she needs comments back by March 10.

DOWNTOWN STRATEGY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
CITY COUNCIL and REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY BOARD

MEETING NOTES – March 17, 2009

Committee members:	City Council members:	Consultants:	Staff:	Public:
Mike Anderson	Brandt Andersson	Jim Stickley	Steve Falk	Guy Atwood
Scott Honegger		Susan Poliwka	Ann Merideth	Gabriel Froymovich
Brayton Noll		Ellen Poling		Jay Lifson
Ann Denny				George Burtt
Erling Horn				Eliot Hudson
Ruth McCahan				
Kathy Merchant				
Steve Cortese				
Geoff Bellenger				
Tom Chastain				
Jeanne Ateljevich				
Carol Singer				
Buck Hughes				
Tom Lee				

Approval of the agenda

Jeanne Ateljevich and Geoff Bellenger asked to speak about the existing specific plans at the end of the meeting.

Public comments

Erling Horn talked about changes in County Connection routes and fares.

Discussion of the Draft Specific Plan with WRT

- Parking Structure
  - Jim Stickley and Ellen Poling discussed the reasoning behind the parking provisions. Target A was designated because that area has a high potential for redevelopment and the new Library will focus new attention on this area – it could be the major destination in the downtown. The core area has a number of locations with decent access, such as Albertsons and Happy Valley Center. Perhaps there could be two smaller structures rather one large.
  - Size requirements for a parking structure – what is a reasonable size. For Lafayette, about 200 spaces would be adequate. A structure needs 120-125' minimum width and at least 250-300' in length for ramps.
  - If the structure is moved outside of the core, then it can be used for employees. Land is cheaper. Parking is a public commodity.
  - Looking at ownership patterns could help with aggregated parking.
  - If the structure was close to BART, it would get BART parkers.
  - What about the Methodist Church? Jim Stickley and Ellen Poling said there are problems – access would put too much traffic on Lafayette Circle, Church is dead set against it, and it is a little remote.
  - At the last meeting, new priorities were established as drivers, and our recommendations should be based on those drivers.

- Public comment from Guy Atwood: Suggest reestablishing the parking commission as an implementing tool.
- There has been a loss of parking spaces since the 1990s because of the additional red zones.
- *Recommendation:*
  - *Remove the blue Target A on the graphic.*
  - *Use one color to show potential areas for a structure(s).*
  - *Use another color to show aggregated parking.*
  - *Include a description of parking structure requirements.*

- Parking Standards
  - Ellen Poling gave the rationale for lowering parking standards near the BART station. There is a perception that there is parking crunch, and at certain locations at certain times of the day, there is. But generally there is adequate parking. Reducing standards is supported by research – people who live near transit own fewer cars and drive less. Reduced standards can be linked to other tools, such as links to a structure, car share site, residential permits, and designated visitor parking. One approach is to do a trial project. Jim Stickley said better parking management today should be undertaken regardless of the standards.
  - The sense of some residents is that we are underparked – these reduced standards work in an urban location, do they work in a "country town"? Ellen Poling said an example is the development around Pleasant Hill BART station. There is a trend in younger people to not own a car or to drive less.
  - Diagonal parking – is it harder? It makes for more parking.
  - Public comment from Guy Atwood: Diagonal parking is scary for seniors.
  - Is there a study that shows that reduced parking works?
  - There should be a survey of car ownership in the Town Center apartments.
  - We need to be forward-thinking and take multiple paths.
  - Seniors will have fewer cars and drive less.
  - Designate an employee lot in the East End.
  - Moving employee parking out of the downtown is probably infeasible.
  - Employee parking is displacing customer parking and retailers need to understand that.
  - Everybody needs to take personal responsibility, and not expect to park in front of the store on the first pass.
  - Provide free bikes and free wagons.
  - *Recommendation: Describe a process that would gradually reduce parking standards near the BART station based on monitoring and surveys.*

- Circulation
  - Jim Stickley addressed the comments that the Plan will make congestion worse. Growth is going to occur. The General Plan will result in growth, and the Plan will result in growth. But the balance of uses in the Plan, over 20 years, will result in less traffic than what would result from the General Plan. The Plan recalibrates the uses. Regarding the dashed streets – their purpose was to dissipate traffic through better connectivity. Ellen Poling said no new arterials or improvements to existing arterials are proposed. Bypasses are not proposed. The Plan proposes more connections to disperse traffic. The ROW reserve is very long-term, will require more study. The Plan preserves the option.
  - What bothers people is the concept that will greater density will result in less traffic – the Plan needs to be rewritten to explain this concept better.
  - People would understand the concept better if there were a comparison with the General Plan.
  - The most useful connection would be between Happy Valley and First Street – the Plan should explain what the community will gain from this connection.
  - The graphics should be labeled better – change "new local streets".
  - The dotted lines take away options from developers.
  - There is a safety issue with drive aisles being used as streets – example: drive aisle behind Baja Fresh.

- Is there a legal issue if the City is directing traffic from public streets to private "streets"?
- Most people driving in the downtown are not passing through – they are going to a destination.
- Success is having Mount Diablo Blvd. slowed down.
- The ROW reserve should be described better.
- The extension of Moraga Road to the north and connecting the ramps would make traffic worse because it make it easier for people to Moraga to get on the freeway.
- We do not want to make driving too convenient.
- There needs to be a strategy to deal with the traffic generated by the schools.
- The dotted lines are really streets now – they are alleys.
- People do not want the ramps connected.
- Work with the schools to develop off-site drop-off and pick-up locations.
- Parents are scared to let their children walk.
- For the Moraga Road / Mount Diablo Blvd. intersection, all the alternatives have been looked at.
- Take the ROW reserve off the plan, but leave it in the text.
- Why can't Moraga Road be five lanes? It should be a long-term goal.
- There was a discussion about MORTRAC, and about the all the alternatives that were looked at during that process.
- Monroe Avenue residents are asking for the street to become one-way – that will add even more traffic to Moraga Road.
- The history needs to be restated.
- If Moraga Road is improved, we will be enabling Moraga to develop more units.
- Options should have costs attached.
- Public comment from Gabriel Froymovich: There is concern in his downtown rental neighborhood about more density and what that will do to the neighborhood.
- Public comment from Eliot Hudson: The community does not want this Plan. The tables at the Workshop were unanimous in saying this. There was no applause for WRT at the end of the meeting summation. The Plan has not changed at all despite all of the community saying it does not want any of this.
- The process for gathering public input before the Plan is revised was explained.
- *Recommendation:*
  - *Explain better the underlying concept of the Plan to reduce long-term congestion by recalibrating the balance of uses in comparison to long-term congestion under the General Plan.*
  - *Characterize better the intent of the circulation network in the text and graphics, such as the dotted lines and ROW reserve.*
  - *Provide more context for the circulation elements by discussing past efforts, particularly MORTRAC.*
  - *Include more language that describes congestion on Moraga Road resulting from school traffic and why working with the schools is important to address this congestion.*

- <u>Parks</u>
  - There should be no redevelopment on the north side of the Shield Block.
  - Any redevelopment will require lots of cooperation from the property owners.
  - The recommendations of the Parks, Trails & Recreation Commission were summarized – the Town Green should be more modest, more urban, than originally recommended.
  - Take out the picture with the swings.
  - Jim Stickley said the Plan does not remove the Roundup or the Hen House. He asked do we want a play area in the Lafayette Circle area? Committee members responded "no", the play area should be at the Library Park. Jim Stickley's response was that there was lots of input from young mothers wanting a play area in the heart of the downtown.
  - Let the downtown continue to gentrify.
  - Green parks and retail do not mix.

- What is the value of the Hen House?
- A park will be an attraction for those staggering out of the Roundup.
- There should be open space, not necessarily green space.
- The Plan should offer the principles, a program, not a design, for the redevelopment of the Shield Block. Jim Stickley responded that showing a design concept in a drawing will spur the next step.
- The Town Green will reduce parking and retail. Jim Stickley responded that there would be no reduction in parking or retail and a slight increase in residential.
- Didn't the Committee agree to a park like the plaza across from Nordstrom?
- Do not call the Town Green a park.
- The pictures of kids playing in the creek are nice, but they are not what we can achieve here.
- Public comment from Guy Atwood: He cited Los Gatos with a park at the end of their retail area.
- Public comment from Jay Lifson: He heard the idea of culverting the creek and then putting a park on top of the culvert.
- It is a great concept to connect BART with Lafayette Circle area and the rest of the downtown.
- *Recommendation:*
  - *Provide principles for the redevelopment of the west side and southern half of the Shield Block to include:*
    - *More urban open space / gathering area than a green park*
    - *Creek enhancement to continue the path from the BART station into the Lafayette Circle area*
    - *Retail uses along Lafayette Circle*
    - *Residential and restaurant uses along the creek*
  - *Revise the graphic to illustrate these principles.*

- <u>Creeks</u>
  - The Creeks Committee did not recommend C7.
  - Dave Bruzzone does not want it on his property.
  - It is isolated from the rest of the creek network.
  - Focus on the downtown first.
  - Public comment from Guy Atwood: People who live on the creeks will not like the creek improvements in the Plan.
  - *Recommendation: Remove C7.*

- <u>Height and Density</u>
  - The height limit in the General Plan should be raised to 45' throughout the redevelopment area. This will avoid making individual amendments for individual projects as was done for Mercantile, Town Center, and Library. Do not change the zoning – leave it 35'. Create overlay zones that would conditionally allow more height.
  - Use the tools already in the General Plan, such as preserving views.
  - This will require a lot of process.
  - Will it deter businesses if they do not get the greater height?
  - Need height for better retail in certain locations.
  - Public comment from Eliot Hudson: A lot of people want to restrict retail – more retail is wrong.
  - Public comment from Guy Atwood: Lafayette can only attract so much retail.
  - This is why we need to explain it better in the Plan.
  - We can have a 35' wall now.
  - There are only a few areas where we have views from the downtown.
  - Trees block views, too.
  - We should delegate the Planning Commission to decide where the overlay zones should go.
  - It is okay to split properties with an overlay zone.
  - In the Gateway District, drop the height limit to 35' and the density to 35 du/acre.
  - We need to know more about unit size before deciding densities.

- Need a traffic generation comparison between 45 du/acre and 65 du/acre.
- Public comment from Eliot Hudson: These density numbers do not include density bonuses – 65 du actually is 87 du. These are all funny numbers.
- Public comment from Guy Atwood: The sizes of units should be stated.
- The Plan should address density bonuses.
- There was a discussion about redevelopment funds for affordable housing and redevelopment requirements for affordable housing in new projects.
- The Plan should describe the housing requirements.
- *Recommendation:*
  - *Raise the height limit in the General Plan to 45' for the planning area.*
  - *Retain 35' as the height limit in the Zoning Ordinance for the planning area.*
  - *Place overlay zones on appropriate parcels, as recommended by the Planning Commission, where additional height could be conditionally allowed.*
  - *Explain redevelopment requirements for affordable housing and density bonuses.*
  - *Retain 35 du/acre in the Downtown Residential District.*
  - *Retain 35 du/acre in the Gateway District.*

- Height and Density – Design Principles
  - Jim Stickley said the language needs to be tightened up to include principles for allowing additional height.
  - WRT should tell us the tools.
  - There are tools in the General Plan.
  - What about the 20% open space option?
  - Jim Stickley said this would be one of the tools. It needs to be more specific in the Plan how this would work and in what circumstances.
  - *Recommendation: Include design principles for allowing additional height, including those in the General Plan, variations in building heights, setbacks, and stepbacks, and open space.*

- Implementation – Financing
  - Jim Stickley said the funding sources are supposed to apply to maintenance as well as the capital improvements. There was supposed to be a placeholder of $400,000 annually, but it was left off the table.
  - There needs to be a separate section for maintenance.
  - Property acquisition costs need to be included.
  - *Recommendation:*
    - *Add a section about ongoing maintenance of public improvements, including costs.*
    - *Include property acquisition costs in the capital improvement costs.*

- Implementation – Priorities
  - Remove the Methodist Church from the parking priority item.
  - Are these in a priority order?
  - Downtown core streetscape is S4 in the table on page 9-2.
  - We could finish these streetscape improvements and they have a smaller price tag.
  - The four priorities fall into the available funds.
  - Jim Stickley asked about the sidewalk gaps.
  - If we fix the sidewalk gaps, we will lose parking.
  - The sidewalk gaps are only $340,000, so they should be included.
  - *Recommendation: Change the priorities to –*
    - *Public parking structure in the Downtown Retail District;*
    - *Shield Block improvements;*
    - *Library Park;*

- *Mount Diablo Blvd. Downtown Streetscape; and*
- *Sidewalk gaps.*

- Implementation – Opportunity Areas
  - People are taking these drawings too literally. If you make them too general, people will want to know where are the windows. If you make them more detailed, people will criticize every detail.
  - It is important to show how the concepts could work.
  - Jim Stickley asked what if the identifying labels were removed (such as Albertsons Block) and if there were more explanation?
  - *Recommendation:*
    - *Remove identifying labels from the graphics and text.*
    - *Provide more language about the purposes of the concepts.*

- Other Issues
  - Jeanne Ateljevich said she had two concerns about uses:
    - The Plan just talks about retail uses. It should distinguish between retail and commercial services.
    - For the Gateway District, we do not want to attract Acalanes students. There should not be retail uses that attract students.
  - Ruth McCahan said she still had a concern about seniors not being addressed in the Plan. There is nothing in the notes or in the issues.

Next Steps

- Meeting on April 1 to finalize the Committee's recommendations to the City Council
- Joint meeting with the City Council, other commissions and committees, and WRT on April 13

Adjourn to the April 1, 2009 meeting

DOWNTOWN STRATEGY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
CITY COUNCIL and REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY BOARD

MEETING NOTES – April 1, 2009

Committee:		Staff:	Public:
Mike Anderson	Erling Horn	Ann Merideth	Joan Bruzzone
Jeanne Ateljevich	Kathy Merchant		Sherry Hoover
Scott Honegger	Buck Hughes		Jay Lifson
Ann Denny	Geoff Bellenger		Lynn Hiden
Steve Cortese	Carol Singer		
Ruth McCahan			

Approval of the agenda

The agenda was approved.

Public comments

Joan Bruzzone and Jay Lifson made comments.

Recommendations to City Council on Draft Plan

The Committee discussed its recommendations and accepted by public comments from Joan Bruzzone, Lynn Hiden, Sherry Hoover, and Jay Lifson.

The Committee decided on the following Primary Issue recommendations:

1. Parking Structure
   - Remove the blue Target A on the graphic.
   - Use one color to show potential areas for a structure(s), including the former Target A location.
   - Use another color to show aggregated parking.
   - Include a description of parking structure requirements (e.g., number of spaces, minimum parcel size).

2. Parking Standards
   - Describe a process that might gradually existing reduce parking standards near the BART station based on monitoring and surveys, if conditions warrant.

3. Circulation
   - Explain better the underlying concept of the Plan to reduce long-term congestion by recalibrating the balance of uses in comparison to long-term congestion under the General Plan.
   - On page 6-3 and elsewhere showing the street network, remove all the dotted lines and ROW reserve from the graphics.
   - On page 6-5:
     - Modify Action 1.3.1 to read: *Through the new parcel development and redevelopment process, provide new circulation connections to more efficiently serve property access (not through traffic) and access to aggregated and public parking facilities.*
     - Modify Action 1.3.1 to delete all bullets.
     - Eliminate Action 1.3.2.

- Provide more context for the circulation elements by discussing past efforts, particularly MORTRAC.
- Include more language that describes congestion on Moraga Road resulting from school traffic and why working with the schools is important to address this congestion.

4. Shield Block
   - Provide principles for the redevelopment of Shield Block to include:
     - an open space / gathering area, rather than a multi-use park, on the northeast side of Happy Valley Creek at the east side of Lafayette Circle
     - protection of existing oak trees
     - creek enhancement to continue the path from the BART station into the Lafayette Circle area
     - retail uses along Lafayette Circle
     - residential, office and restaurant uses along the creek
   - Revise the graphics on page 7-7 to illustrate these principles.

5. Creeks & Parks
   - Remove C7.
   - Remove P1 and P3.

6. Height and Density
   - Raise the height limit in the General Plan to 45' for selected portions of the planning area.
   - Retain 35' as the height limit in the Zoning Ordinance for the planning area.
   - Place overlay zones on appropriate parcels, as recommended by the Planning Commission, where additional height could be conditionally allowed.
   - Establish guidelines for allowing additional height, including those in the General Plan, variations in building heights, setbacks, and stepbacks, and open space.
   - Explain redevelopment requirements for affordable housing and density bonuses.
   - Retain 35 du/acre in the Downtown Residential District.
   - Retain 35 du/acre in the Gateway District.
   - Include text that is consistent with the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance amendment to create an overlay district specifically for senior housing which addresses their unique parking and density needs for seniors currently underway by Planning.

7. Implementation – Financing
   - Add a section about ongoing maintenance of public improvements, including costs and funding sources.
   - Include property acquisition costs in the capital improvement costs.

8. Implementation – Priorities
   - Identify the following as Immediate Priorities (not in order of preference)
     - Increased public parking in the Downtown Retail District, including off-site employee parking;
     - Shield Block improvements;
     - Library Park;
     - Mount Diablo Blvd. Downtown Streetscapes; and
     - Pedestrian walkway gaps.

9. Implementation – Opportunity Areas
   - Provide more language about the purposes of the concept drawings.
   - Generalize concept drawings.
   - On page 9-10, highlight and modify the following sentence: *The identification of these sample sites is in no way meant to be a recommendation of the Specific Plan or any kind of endorsement of these sites over any other sites for development.*

- On page 9-15, highlight the following paragraph: *There are no specific development plans for these opportunity areas at this time. Specific development plans and programs have not been formulated for the se opportunity areas, and would ultimately be shaped by market forces, plans of private property owners, and the types and amount of assistance that could be provided by the Lafayette Redevelopment Agency.*

The Committee decided on the following Secondary Issue recommendations:

10. Boundary of the Downtown Retail District
    - Move the eastern boundary of this District to First Street.

11. Park Theater
    - No further comments.

12. Types of businesses
    - Delete "small" from the Overall Vision statement on page 3-1.

13. Changes in Zoning Districts
    - Defer to Planning Commission.

14. Public improvement cross-sections
    - Sidewalk widths in the core should be wide enough to promote strolling and outdoor dining.

15. Document title
    - Rename the document the Downtown Lafayette Specific Plan.

16. Goals and actions
    - No further comments.

17. Private Realm Vision Statement
    - Change the vision statements on pages 3-10 and 7-29 to be the same as the following modified statement on page 7-38 (Community Character Goal 7): *A Downtown where the development of the commercial/mixed use and residential neighborhoods that encourages the continued evolution of a distinctive Lafayette character (described in general as informal with variations in styles, massing, building heights and setbacks, public sightlines to surrounding hills and a dominance of landscape) and a high level of quality.*

18. Seniors
    - Add a separate section to the Plan about senior needs because, by 2020, 30% of Lafayette will be seniors. The section should address housing, transportation, and a senior facility.

19. Uses
    - Align zoning districts and uses to the Plan's character districts.

The Committee did not have any further changes to the issues that will be addressed in the EIR and minor issues recommended for Plan revisions.

Adjourn

The Committee adjourned to the April 13 joint meeting.